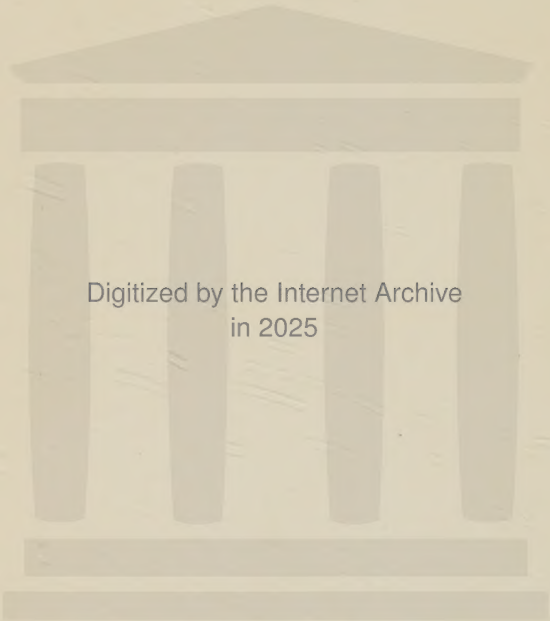

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EUGENICS

AIMS AND METHODS

BY

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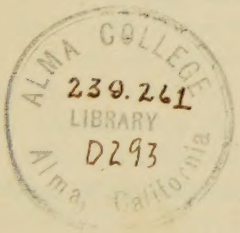

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PREFACE

An attempt is made in the following pages to examine and criticise the aims and methods of modern eugenics. The main purport of this small book is to put the Catholic view, as the writer apprehends it, before his readers, on some of the methods for dealing with defectives suggested by the extreme eugenist, especially the method of sterilisation. Considerable use has been made of two Reports, the one, that of the Board of Control for the year 1928, the other, that of the Mental Deficiency Committee (1929). The writer here acknowledges his indebtedness to both. It will be found by the reader that both Reports reinforce the Catholic view as it is presented in these pages. Should the reader be induced to go to the Reports themselves he will find himself equipped with practically all the data for a sound and a long view as to the treatment of the defective. The problem of the defective is an urgent one; it may soon become acute. As in every urgent crisis, so in this, some people are led to adopt an attitude which, as we believe, is morally objectionable, and will do great harm to the State. Birth control, as it is called, has

been adopted to meet the economic situation. The extreme eugenist favours sterilisation for the same reason. The present writer is of opinion that both suggested palliatives are a sacrifice of the moral sense to temporary economic relief.

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CHAPTER I

THE ORIGIN AND AIM OF MODERN EUGENICS

The word "eugenic" means good in stock, of good breed; "eugenics," the ascertained principles of breeding, which, if applied, will produce a good stock. The term was defined by Sir Francis Galton as "the science which deals with all influences that improve the inborn qualities of a race, also with those that develop them to the utmost advantage." Consequently, eugenics is not concerned with every possible way of improving the human race, but only with that which is applied to the control and perfection of germinal characteristics, a term that assumes the force of heredity. Eugenics is, therefore, a science which assumes that certain qualities are heritable. The eugenist is satisfied that there is ground for holding that environment cannot explain everything in the dispositions of men and women. The earnest student and seeker for a remedy for feeble-mindedness may quite reasonably, and without committing himself to any theory, take the cases quoted by eugenists as establishing with sufficient cogency their claim. The following two cases, if extreme,

may serve for illustration (Fallon, *The Church and Eugenics*) : A Jonathan Edwards devoted himself to the evangelisation of the Red Indians. His descendants included : Functionaries 80, officers 75, University professors 65, rectors 12, clergymen 100, judges 31, barristers 102, graduates 285, writers 60, persons in high rank in diplomacy, politics, government 29 : total 839.

A certain blind hunter who was also a hard drinker, born in 1720, had amongst his descendants : Criminals 197, beggars 6, vagabonds 300, diseased, drunkards, and dead from misconduct 440, prostitutes 50, supposed to be upright 213, died young 300 : total, 1506.

If some very ancient writers were eugenists, they were so in a very unpractical way and left nothing to posterity. Sir Francis Galton is the pioneer of modern eugenics. His work, *Inquiries into Human Faculty* (1883), attracted a great deal of attention. He set forth the part played, as he supposed, by heredity and environment in the improvement of the race. His subsequent essay, *Eugenics : Its Definition, Scope, Aims* (1904), set out his programme.

Many people at that time were thinking as Galton thought, for they fancied they observed that men were losing their vigour, their mental and moral equilibrium or stability, as life became more artificial, as comfort became more general, as the cultivation of the intelligence and the passions was

corrupting the young, as the growth of our large cities depopulated the rural areas, as industrialism caused maladies peculiar to certain forms of work, such as mining, glass-blowing, work with lead, arsenic, phosphorus, etc. The race was developing in a wrong direction. Offspring was becoming tainted, physically and mentally. Add to this natural multiplication of defective children the fact that the progress of medical science has greatly helped to preserve those who, without it, would have died off. In other words, Natural Selection would have killed off multitudes, but medical skill saved them, but they remained the unfit. Furthermore, philanthropy, works of charity, institutions for the incurable, the afflicted, the diseased and the aged, help to increase the proportionate numbers of the weak, the degenerate, the neurotic, the defective, so that if any of these people were patched up and restored to social life, they propagate their kind, the same defects evincing themselves in their children (cf. Fallon, *ibid.*, pp. 14, 15).

The aim of eugenists as experimental investigators is to discover, if possible, the root causes of physical and mental defectiveness. As practical workers, their aim is to apply certain methods to breeding, so as to eliminate dysgenic and anti-social qualities, and to preserve to posterity the good qualities. Their aim is to replace the cruelty of Natural Selection by processes that are

merciful and not less effectual. Their first object is to check the multiplication of the unfit, that is, their birth-rate ; their second, to increase the birth-rate, within limits, of the offspring of fit and healthy parents. No more human beings are, in their view, to be allowed to be brought into the world than can be duly cared for, and none at all of inferior stock.

Readers will not, it is hoped, at once dismiss the whole thing, and condemn eugenics as savouring too much of the stock-yard. If the science embodies good sound principles, which do not offend against the moral nature of man, there is no reason why they should not be adopted. Can we not wish (cf. *What is Eugenics*, by Major Leonard Darwin) that children should be well housed, at least as well as cattle, and fed with suitable food, guarded against infection, and saved from overcrowding ? Should we not wish, before all else, that children should be the offspring of healthy parents ? Should we not first attend to stock and then to environment ? That, it seems, is the aim of the eugenist.

CHAPTER II

THE BURDEN OF THE UNFIT

From the economic point of view, the upkeep of the unfit, whether vicious, lunatic, imbecile, or merely feeble-minded, has imposed an ever-increasing burden on the State, and money that might have been expended on improving the conditions of life amongst the more needy fit members of the State has been spent in keeping alive those people who are not only inefficient, but are a positive loss to it. Thus, in a family of, say, eight or ten children, public authority will remove the one tuberculous child but leave the others to shift for themselves in the most insanitary surroundings. Assistance is given to the defective, and quite rightly, but none to the sound. Compare the almost princely conditions of living which are given to a child that is diseased or defective, with the sordid conditions in which healthy children are allowed to live until they, too, contract disease. The eugenist asks the question : Can we not go to the root of the matter and prevent all or much of this loss ? There is another class, not defective, but consisting of the stupid, the careless, the

intractable, the idle, the habitual drunkard, and those too weak to do a day's work. These constitute a vast multitude, who are, as it were, parasites on the body of the citizens (cf. Darwin, *ibid.*, p. 57). To support all these, the ordinary citizen has to pay indirect taxes on nearly everything he drinks, eats, and wears ; his glass of beer, pipe of tobacco, cigarette, even his amusements are taxed, and an attempt to tax his betting was made. Consequently, rents are raised, wages have to keep pace, though at a long distance, prices soar, unemployment increases, doles are multiplied, trade is lost, and the vicious circle seems so complete that it is impossible to escape from it. The writer referred to adds that if criminals and defectives were reduced in number, it would not be necessary to employ 70,000 police in England and Wales ; sickness, which is many cases is due to want of good stock, causes every year, it is said, a loss of 270,000 years' work.

Such is the indictment of the defective uttered by the eugenist. The matter is becoming urgent, and something must be done soon.

To see what has been suggested by a body of experts, who have the uncommon sense to take a long view, and one that does not offend large sections of the people, we may be permitted to refer at some length to the Report of the Mental Deficiency Committee, being a Joint Committee of the Board of Education and the Board of Control (1929).

We do so for two reasons. First, we shall find nowhere else so authoritative a statement on the actual present state and distribution of mental defectives. Secondly, the recommendations given in the Report for dealing with defectives are those of a body of experts, and it is gratifying to find that Catholics can agree with the final conclusions of this body of competent and broad-minded specialists. When, therefore, Catholics are accused of thinking a great deal too much of the next world—which, of course, is not possible—and a great deal too little of their fellow human beings—which indeed is quite possible—they may appeal to this considered judgment of experts, as against those eugenists who may be said to be extreme in their views and demands.

On referring to the Report, one is struck and disturbed by the large number of defectives existing in our midst. We do not take account of the insane nor of those actually imprisoned for legal offences. We mean those only who are judged to be mentally defective by a definite standard. The standard adopted was, "the inability of a person to suit himself to his environment and live an independent life as an ordinary citizen," that is, "incapacity for social adaptation in consequence of his incomplete mental development" (Rep., Pt. III, p. 96).

The number of such defectives, it is now established, is far greater than was supposed. Previous attempts at ascertainment of their

number had been spasmodic and inaccurate. Even the present ascertainment does not claim to be final, it is rather an assumed figure, based on most careful work during two years. The reasons for previous defects in ascertainment were, as is pointed out in the Report (Pt. III, p. 9), that it was of little use to know of the existence of defectives unless accommodation for them was available, defectives were not kept under supervision, it was not realised that high grade defectives could be legally certified, and the fact that Local Authorities could not ascertain the number of defectives in Poor Law Institutions and Mental Hospitals. The actual number of defectives of all ages, reported to the Local Authorities in England and Wales in the latest returns prior to the work of the Committee, was 61,522, or 1·57 per 1000 of the population, whereas the Committee, to whose Report we refer, accepted the figure 300,000 and the proportion of 8 per 1000 as expressing actual facts, as near as they could be reasonably assumed on the basis of the investigations. This estimate takes no account of the 37,000 children who are mentally defective within the meaning of the Education Act, for they were not regarded as deficient socially.

The method of ascertainment was to carry out investigations in six areas regarded as fairly typical of England and Wales as a whole, except as regards the relative populations of urban and rural areas.

The standard adopted for adults in the investigations was a mental age of eight years or under.

It is of interest to be told that the incidence of all grades of defect is considerably greater in rural areas than it is in urban areas, the numbers being 10·49 for rural areas and 6·71 for urban areas per 1000 in each case of total population, and the difference between the areas is most marked in respect of the children between the ages of seven and fourteen years, viz. 39·7 per 1000 school children in rural areas compared with 20·9 in urban areas. If there has been an increase in mental deficiency—and the Committee finds it hard to believe that there has not—" it has been caused, not by the deleterious industrial conditions of the large towns, but by selective hereditary features operating in isolated rural areas, where the environment is most conducive to the birth and maintenance of a healthy stock " (Rep., Pt. III, p. 38). If we ask the question, where precisely are defectives to be found, the Report supplies an answer.

" Lower grade defectives (idiots and imbeciles) are found in all types of district and all classes of family. But in the case of the feeble-minded, there were great differences in different schools and villages and in different parts of the same town. The town schools which contained the largest proportion of feeble-minded children were generally situated in slum areas, and in

villages where there was the largest number of adult defectives, there were generally found to be correspondingly large numbers of feeble-minded children. With closer investigation these were traced to family foci. This was the case in many of the villages, where the defective children were found in a small restricted number of families, often inter-related by marriage." The Report infers that this appears to establish the fact " that feeble-mindedness is more likely to occur among population of a generally low mental and physical level, i.e. in slum districts and in rural areas with a poor type of inhabitant, and is likely to be most prevalent in a certain limited group, the subnormal group, of the general population." The evidence is, however, not conclusive in the mind of the Committee, but it does at least point to there being some relation between the slum problem and the problem of mental defect (Rep., Pt. III, p. 38).

In view of the extreme care with which the investigations were carried out and the reluctance of the Committee to recommend the measures which the extreme eugenist wishes to be adopted forthwith, the words of the Committee in praise of eugenics in general (Pt. III, p. 82) may well give pause to those who dismiss the science as a fad. The prevention of mental deficiency, so the Report states, is a problem whose solution depends largely upon the progress made by this science. It will not help us, therefore,

to use expressions such as "the horror known as eugenics," and "the sanctity of such a word as health should not numb people to the stench of such a phrase as eugenics." Catholics need not condemn the laudable aim of the science, though they rightly condemn some of the methods advocated by those who are, as it were, intoxicated with the new wine of the science. The scientific eugenist will find that the Church has anticipated him, and has, as will be shown later on, laid down certain rules which are eugenical in the highest degree. We know quite well that the problem of the defective would be solved by the observance of the Church's laws. But as these will not be observed in the immediate future by the majority of the people in this country, Catholics are right in going with eugenists where they can be followed, for they will be but re-discovering avenues to social and individual health which have been well trodden for centuries. This is a bold claim on the part of a Catholic writer. We trust that it will be substantiated in the sequel.

CHAPTER III

KINDS OF DEFECTIVENESS AND REMEDIES PROPOSED

THE Report examines the two kinds of defectiveness, and proceeds in Chapter V to deal with mental deficiency as a genetic and social problem. It is in the second part of this treatment that the Committee ventures to make its recommendation, and it is here, most of all, that the Catholic will scrutinise the matter closely, and decide whether or not he can accompany the Committee the whole way. It is the conviction of the present writer that he can.

There are, it is stated (Pt. III, p. 79), two types of mental deficiency, the primary and the secondary. The first is said to be due to germinal variation or defect, the second to be caused by environmental factors at some stage subsequent to conception. The two kinds are called primary and secondary, because they are, respectively, inborn, and, as it were, subsequent.

The Report accepts the view that the majority of mental defectives are cases of primary amentia, i.e. that they are persons inherently incapable of normal mental

development. This defectiveness is said to be found in all classes of society, but a larger number will be found in a restricted group of families. These groups include a much larger proportion of insane persons, epileptics, paupers, criminals (especially recidivists), unemployables, habitual slum dwellers, prostitutes, inebriates, and other social inefficients, than groups of families not containing mental defectives (Pt. III, p. 80). Now, though this defectiveness is found in all classes of the people, the great majority are to be found amongst the lowest 10 per cent in the social scale. Consequently, if effective measures were taken to get rid of the defectiveness of the next generation, they would have to be taken against this 10 per cent, a perfectly impracticable proposition. Any milder measures, with less wide a sweep, would be ineffectual, for it is established that defective children born of actually defective parents do not form a large proportion of the total number of defectives.

The two obvious methods that might be adopted to prevent the propagation of defectives are sterilisation and segregation. When the Report records these two methods, it does not say that it approves of them both; indeed, it does not approve of sterilisation at all. It adds a third, namely, socialisation.

Without definitely committing itself to any of the methods for the present, the Report suggests that certain measures could be

adopted at once. For instance, measures could at once be taken against those defectives who are at present continually in and out of Poor Law Institutions and Mental Hospitals and Prisons. There is first the unmarried woman admitted two, three, or more times to the maternity ward of the workhouse. These might be kept in institutions for longer periods, and afterwards placed under careful supervision and safeguarded from moral dangers. The suggestion is very sound, both for the social and for the individual benefit of all concerned. But who is to safeguard these women from moral dangers ? The authorities of Catholic Institutions have no delusions about the fate of these women when they are released. A second and a third lapse makes one lose all confidence in them. The careful supervision appears possible only if they are obliged to return daily to the same home as they found in their trouble, but at what a cost to the State !

Secondly, there is another type, that of the recidivist of the criminal class. The Report suggests that these should be detained longer, with improved methods of treatment. Longer detention, and indeed very long detention in the case of the genuine recidivist, would entail a revision of all legal sentences. One wonders if this is at all practicable. We are here in contact with the spirit of the English Law, which is very tender in dealing with personal liberty. But

with very long sentences of detention and improved conditions, there would undoubtedly be some hope of lessening the recurrence of crime, if there were little hope of improving the majority of the criminals. But that would be a considerable gain, and there would be some at least of the criminals who would learn the lesson that they could be happier if they became law-abiding citizens. The improvement of prison conditions is urgently needed. We quote the following description, not that it applies to the prisons of this country, but because it applied within very recent years—and possibly still applies—to a certain country. The extract merely endorses with immense force the recommendation of the Report in respect of conditions in which criminals should be allowed to live a self-respecting life, if they retain any measure of self-respect. Some at least of the criminals would benefit.

A certain Assistant Attorney-General in charge of prison administration recently wrote: "The city and county gaols are in effect relics of the Dark Ages when criminals were dealt with by studied cruelty and brutality. . . . Into cells originally designed for one occupant are crowded four or five prisoners, or even more. Drug addicts are confined with non-addicts. Tubercular prisoners and those suffering from loathsome and contagious diseases use the same bedding, same drinking-cup, same dishes, and same wash and bath-tub as healthy inmates. For

the most part, the prisoners in such antiquated institutions are maintained in deadly and soul-destroying idleness." An inspector of prisons in the same country, who visited approximately 1500 gaols and penal institutions, said recently : " 95 per cent of the gaols, however widely separated, are driving with uniform efficiency toward one great end—the making of hardened, vicious, and abandoned criminals." This is the state of things in a highly civilised country, if it can be called such. The extreme eugenist there urges the sterilisation of criminals and defectives, to be let loose on the general public. In fact, criminals are first created and then sterilised, and the evil grows apace. It is little wonder that laws enforcing sterilisation are a dead letter. The lesson has been learnt from experience that it is an unsocial experiment. But the wholehearted eugenist in England appears to wish to try the experiment here, and to fence it round with reservations, limitations, and theoretical supervisions that are fatuous and foredoomed to failure. That they must be so is too evident to anyone who knows how official bodies begin with a fanfare of high-sounding promises, but end in being mute, owing to an infinite complication of administrative regulations.

Another measure, the Report states, affects the dull child at school. These " should be trained and fitted for some definite trade, in which they will be likely to find permanent

employment and they should have social care after they have left school, for otherwise the dull child, having become a social outcast at school, remains so afterwards. Suitable education for retarded children leads to a higher cultural level, and this leads to smaller families, for these persons maintain a higher standard of living and become unwilling to assume the responsibility of parenthood, unless they can give their children at least as good or even better opportunities than they themselves enjoyed." The suggestion of the Report would seem to anyone who has a care for the dull-witted child, and who wants the ranks of the unemployed to be diminished, the solution of many problems, but the opposition of those who do not want any vocational training at school is strong and persistent. No politician would venture, in the present state of political parties, to press for any distinction of schooling between class and class in the primary schools, though the Hadow scheme may, through force of circumstances, lead to it.

The second kind of defectiveness dealt with in the Report is called secondary amentia. This is said to be due to the arrest of mental development by extraneous causes. It is held by some that environment can also injure the germ plasm and so cause primary amentia, which, though not inborn, displays phenomena as though it were. These extraneous factors are e.g. venereal diseases, alcoholism, and other toxæmic conditions,

unhealthy state of the mother during pregnancy, injuries during birth, serious illness, and, as some believe, malnutrition during infancy (Pt. III, p. 85). A good deal of this trouble is preventable. Good midwifery will, of course, preserve defective children as well as the fit. Post-natal ailments can be prevented by the work of visiting nurses. The early treatment of venereal diseases and of congenitally syphilitic children would, it is hoped, lead to an arrest of deterioration and defectiveness. Nothing need be said about alcoholism, which, fortunately, has become rarer,[1] nor of cretinism, which yields readily to treatment.

These methods suggested above are preventive. But the very important question arises : Can anything be done to check the social consequences of mental deficiency ? It is here that the fundamental disagreement emerges between the Committee—and we may add, the Catholic view—and the extreme eugenist, such as Major L. Darwin (*What is Eugenics ?*) and Lord Riddell (*Medico-Legal Problems*) and many others.

To prevent the higher grade feeble-minded children from being a burden on others, they can be trained to be almost self-supporting. This has been found to be so in practice, if they can be trained to be responsible before they leave the homes or schools. An attempt is being made in some

[1] Imprisonments for drunkenness were 50,000 in 1913, 6,500 in 1927.

places to leave these boys, when they have reached the age of about seventeen or upwards, to manage an establishment for themselves under a very mild sort of supervision, not of course singly but in small groups. The experiment necessarily proves to be a costly one in the beginning, but a great deal less costly than if these boys were thrown into the competitive ring and left to shift for themselves. They produce something at all events. The lower grade feeble-minded can be taught only some very simple unskilled work, which contributes a little to their maintenance. In both cases, these children must be taken very early, and after their training, extending over several years, must be subject to careful and continual supervision. These suggestions of the Report are bound in the long run to save the country a good deal of unproductive outlay, and the method suggested is obviously a better investment of public money.

In regard to the lower grade defectives, it is thought that they can only be taught to keep themselves clean and employed in some way that shall make them happy and less of a burden on others. These children should not be left in their homes where they rapidly deteriorate. So much as to the suggestions in regard to children.

To ameliorate the social consequences of the existing adult defective, the Report records the three measures which would be effectual in ridding the public of the existing

and growing menace of the defective. It examines each measure dispassionately, as we have to do ; it is here that the Catholic view has to be stated with the greatest possible clearness, and therefore we propose to deal with these three suggested measures at some length. The three measures are, sterilisation, segregation, and socialisation.

CHAPTER IV

THE SUGGESTIONS OF THE REPORT STATED AND EXAMINED

1. In regard first to sterilisation, the Report states that even if this measure could be applied to all the mentally defectives, the reduction of the number of defectives would not be great, for " it must be remembered," we are told, " that defective children born of defective parents do not form a large proportion of the total number of defectives existing. However drastically and thoroughly we might deal with its defective members, the remainder of the subnormal group (of the population) can in many cases be regarded as carriers of the defect, though themselves not defective, and these will probably produce their full quota of mental defectives in the next generation, particularly as the relative fertility of this group is greater than that of normal persons."

The Report condemns sterilisation on several grounds, not indeed on the moral grounds on which Catholics condemn it, or should condemn it, as it appears to us ; the condemnation seems well-grounded, and therefore the question of sterilisation does

not, in the view of the Committee, arise at all, an opinion from which Catholics may derive considerable comfort, realising as they can that for once at least the moral and the sociological views are seen to be concurrent. Catholics maintain that these views always are concurrent, but the evidence is not always quite so convincing as it is shown to be in the present case.

The reasons for the rejection of the first suggested measure are as follows:

Legal sterilisation has not succeeded in U.S.A. Laws were passed in twenty States, but only in two have they been enforced on any considerable scale. The reasons for this failure are that public opinion has disapproved of the practice—Catholic writers have certainly disapproved of it—there has been the obvious difficulty of deciding who should and who should not be sterilised, it has been said to tend towards the spread of immorality and venereal diseases, and the relation of heredity to mental disease raises doubts as to the gain by sterilisation. As immediately bearing on this series of reasons, it is pertinent to add and to criticise what Lord Riddell says in the work referred to (p. 96). He says "That sterilisation would lead to promiscuity, and the spread of venereal disease is an objection based on the assumption that sterilised lunatics and defectives would be turned loose on the community." No such suggestion has been put forward. They would still be subject to supervision. On

this we may be allowed to remark that supervision is likely to be ineffectual. It might indeed be carried out for a few years, but people get tired of looking after other people, and if they are going to be paid for doing so, we know quite well how little effectual payment is in securing many things that it ought to secure, and secondly, if payment is going to be made for this great body of defectives, it will not be made in a practical way, and even if it were so made, what financial advantage will be gained over retaining defectives in institutions? Very little, we should imagine, with also the added risk, nay the certainty, that large numbers of designing scoundrels will take advantage of sterilised defectives. The only safe method of preventing contamination of the public will be to keep defectives out of the way altogether. Add to this that defectives let loose—we are assuming this for the moment—will produce absolutely nothing towards their maintenance, which they certainly could do in institutions. But Lord Riddell mentions another alternative, namely, retention of the sterilised defectives in institutions. In that hypothesis, there is no need at all to sterilise them. They cost the same in either case. Why then trouble to prevent their propagating, seeing that they will not have the opportunities of ever doing so? Lord Riddell continues: "Critics who rely on this objection (viz. promiscuity and the spread of venereal disease), overlook

the fact that a lunatic or defective intent upon exercising his or her sexual functions is not deterred by the fear of a child. In other words, sterilisation would not remove inhibition, because the inhibition is non-existent." This appears to us to be very strange. Everyone knows that sterilisation does not take away the desire of sexual intercourse nor the capacity of indulging in it. Consequently, it appears to us that if these defectives are to be released after the operation—that must be Lord Riddell's hypothesis, if he mentions inhibition—there are other people besides the defectives on whom the absence of the inhibition will have an immense influence, and it is there precisely that the danger lies of an increase of promiscuity and venereal disease, for the one inhibition, viz. the possibility of conception will have been entirely removed from the minds of those who will exploit the sterilised defective for his own purposes. This, of course, supposes that the defective will have been released, but that is the supposition made, since it is superfluous to speak of inhibitions in institutions. There, the defective simply does not get the opportunity of sexual intercourse, inhibition or no inhibition. Making a further reference to the state of things in U.S.A., the Report continues : " In California, the law is enforced, and it has enabled only a small proportion of the defectives to be discharged from institutions. The Committee feel that

there is not sufficient evidence to justify the general adoption of sterilisation of defectives, and are convinced that even if it were adopted no great alleviation of the burden of mental deficiency would follow." It is of great interest to see the reasons which induced the Committee to reach this conclusion, for it is a conclusion that is traversed by the extreme eugenist on *a priori* grounds. The ordinary eugenist who sits at his table and arrives at sweeping conclusions based on what he thinks ought to happen is a poor guide in the vast and sombre realms of sociology, in comparison with the experts, both of the Committee and of the Board of Control—of which, later—who had the benefit of an immense mass of evidence before them. The reasons, therefore, for the conclusions of the Committee are as follows : " Sterilisation would not reduce appreciably the number of defectives already in institutions, for few of them would be fit to be restored permanently to live in the community. Sterilisation does not make defectives more stable nor prevent them getting into mischief, and may increase their moral danger and prove injurious to the health of the community. Furthermore, the sterilisation of a few cases would not appreciably, if at all, reduce the urgent need for a large increase in institutional accommodation." Thus, it appears to the present writer that Local Authorities are not only not doing their duty in making

provision for the defectives within their respective areas, but they are waiting for the legal sterilisation—if it ever comes about—that will be no remedy for the evil.

Lastly, the Committee points out that legalised sterilisation would enhance the difficulties of bringing defectives within the scope of Mental Deficiency Acts, for parents would be less likely to apply, the Certifying Officer would be more reluctant to issue his Certificate, the Magistrate less willing to make an Order.

Since, therefore, these experts of the Committee reject sterilisation of defectives as a practical remedy for the reduction of the incidence of the malady, the Catholic may on that ground alone—though he has others not less cogent—condemn it. But neither the Report under discussion, nor the Reports of the Board of Control satisfy the extreme eugenist. He has his own theory. As one illustration, Lord Riddell (*Medico-Legal Problems*, p. 92) rejects the findings and the arguments of the Board of Control, and ventures to state the exact opposite. Thus: "Sterilisation would enable the Board to carry out their parole, discharge, and licence policy with more freedom and more safety to the community. . . . Sterilisation would tend to reduce the multiplication of the mentally diseased—a most serious national menace, not only to the present generation, but to future generations for whom we have serious responsibilities." Just

the contrary is proved to be, if not certain, at least much more probable, from both statistics and reason. Is it quite fair, then, for Lord Riddell to say: "The Board are entitled to our sympathy. Evidently they do not want to 'bell the cat!' They see the dangers but are afraid to cope with them."

To see exactly what the Board thinks of the matter, we will venture to quote the fourth section from the latest Report of the Board of Control (p. 62). With all the evidence before them and with the help of the special reports of those whose official business it was to visit every Mental Hospital in England and Wales, their conclusions were the exact contrary to the views of the extreme eugenist. The Annual Report, 1928, in the Section on the marriage of defectives and sterilisation, says:

"We are still of opinion that sufficient data are not yet available on which to base any definite recommendations. Such statistics as have been collected have been in the main compiled with the object of establishing a proposition the validity of which has been assumed on merely *a priori* grounds . . . until reliable data are available, we are not prepared to make any recommendations in regard to these proposals (i.e. sterilisation of mental defectives). It is, however, important to remove certain misapprehensions as to the possible financial savings which would result. It cannot be too

emphatically stated that sterilisation will not obviate the need for colony or other institutional treatment for large numbers of mental defectives. So far as the low grade cases, idiots and imbeciles, are concerned, the need for institutional treatment is too obvious to need any argument. But in the case of the feeble-minded, who form approximately three-quarters of the whole number of mental defectives, it is not sufficiently understood that the great majority require care, supervision, and control, because they are incapable of managing themselves. As the Wood Committee have pointed out, the criterion of mental defect is social adaptability. The majority of defectives cannot support themselves, many cannot resist criminal impulses, and others, though not actively dangerous, are a menace to the community, because they have no idea of truth or social obligation, and because they cannot keep themselves decently clean or observe the simplest rules of personal hygiene. Some have so little self-control that they are apt in moments of excitement to attack others and to commit crimes of violence, including arson. Many are sexually unrestrained or perverted, and are a constant danger to women and children. Anti-social tendencies and habits of this kind are not to be cured or even lessened by sterilisation. As the provision of institutional beds is far below even the most conservative estimate of present needs, we hope that no Local

Authority will relax their efforts because of any fallacious promise of what sterilisation might achieve.

"It follows, therefore, that sterilisation is relatively unimportant in relation to those defectives who are receiving institutional treatment. But while there will always be a large number whose lives must be spent in institutions and colonies, there will also be a far larger number who must remain in the community. . . . Roughly speaking, out of 300,000 mental defectives in England and Wales, one-third will require institutional provision and two-thirds some form of community care, that is care outside an institution. It is in the case of the latter that the risk of procreation arises, and the case for sterilisation, if such a case exist at all, is strongest. It can hardly be denied that the 200,000 defectives who must remain in the community are wholly unfitted for parenthood. Though it does not necessarily follow that the children of defective parents will themselves be defective, they are liable to be exposed to the miseries and hardships of being brought up by a mother or father incapable of self-control who will most certainly neglect them, and who may, by reason of mental instability and ungovernable temper, aggravate by cruelty the results of ignorance and neglect. But it does not seem to us necessarily to follow that the probability of parenthood, so obviously undesirable in such cases, can only be

obviated by sterilisation. We believe that much could be done by perfecting the protection afforded by supervision and guardianship. With a more enlightened and educated public opinion, the rational use of these two safeguards would go a long way to eliminate, or at any rate to reduce to a negligible minimum, the risk of procreation. To do this two things are absolutely essential: (1) that the Committees for the Mentally Defective, the Justices and the Visitors should understand and appreciate the necessity for the lifelong protection and care of defectives; and (2) that no person should undertake the care of defectives in the community until they have received special instructions and are willing to carry them out. It is worse than useless to place defectives under the care of guardians who deny that they are defectives and see no harm in their becoming parents. If and when the community fully realises the importance of this, and when they are enlightened enough to warn off all possible mates, then the risks of community care will be materially lessened. At the present time the contrary is often the case.

"In our view it would be a valuable safeguard if the marriage of defectives, whether under order or under supervision, could be prohibited by law. It is astonishing that on so-called grounds of morality well-meaning persons are found to countenance and even to encourage the marriage of defectives who

are not only obviously unfit to undertake the responsibility of parenthood, but are incapable of assuming the responsibilities of the relationship into which they propose to enter."

We have quoted at length the view of the Board of Control to show how it endorses the view of the Committee on Mental Deficiency. These views are, of course, based on practical grounds and sociological reasons. The Catholic has ethical reasons as well, of which something will be said later. But it is extraordinarily helpful to the Catholic to know that the considered conclusions of mental experts and the principles of Christian ethics reach the same point, and in this matter proceed *pari passu*.

2. The second measure proposed for the relief of the problem of the defective is segregation. On this, the Committee on Mental Deficiency has made the following recommendations :

(*a*) The lower grade defectives are in many cases nursing cases with epilepsy and paralysis, and many of them die during infancy or childhood. Many others remain at home and when their parents die are sent to institutions. These, therefore, are cases for segregation.

(*b*) Another group is that of older defectives, most of whom are unemployable. These, too, must be segregated.

(*c*) A third group is that of the temperamentally unstable. These must be segregated

at an early age, else it is impossible to stabilise them sufficiently to be useful and happy members of the colony community. These are the conspicuous social failures of all mental defectives. Very few of these can ever be restored to the community. They are the great failures of the outside world. They require permanent segregation.

(*d*) High and medium grade cases can be trained to do useful work, and a few years' training in institutions would make them fit. But they cannot gain admission into the institutions and they remain at large.

3. The third method advocated for the treatment of the mentally defective is called socialisation, namely, the assimilating the mentally defective into the life of the general community. As a fact, the mentally defective child is ostracised at school and continues to be so all through life. No employer will take him or her. They are weeded out early on and remain a burden on their parents or on the State. But there is a large number of the feeble-minded who are fairly stable, and could be successfully socialised ; but this depends on the amount of training and supervision they get. These are both essential.

The mentally inferior persons are generally the first to lose their situations when workmen have to be discharged. Idle, unprofitable, unwanted at home, miserable, not infrequently a moral danger, they are a burden to everyone. For them, a beginning

has been made by the establishment of Handicraft Centres, but after training, the process of restoring them to the general life of the community must be gradual to be successful. There must be complete co-operation between the officers and teachers of the institutions and the officers of the Local Authority and the social workers who supervise the defectives sent out on licence.

A large majority of mentally defective adults who receive financial help from public funds are dealt with under the Poor Law, not as defectives, but as paupers, in receipt of out-relief. Some, of course, are unemployable, but there are many who could be employed usefully in Handicraft Centres or otherwise. The money thus spent would be better spent. To deal with a defective as a pauper is to ostracise him, but if he renders some service, however modest or humble, he will acquire some self-respect and then begin to take his part in the general life. That is socialisation.

CHAPTER V

CRITICISM OF EUGENICAL PROPOSALS

1. *The science of eugenics and its methods.*

Catholics have no quarrel with eugenics as such. They quarrel with some of the measures advocated by some eugenists. There are, it is admitted on all hands, some eugenical methods that deserve all praise, such as the choice of a healthy partner for marriage, extreme medical care in maternity hospitals, the healthy rearing of children, of which so many parents know so little and apparently do not wish to learn. Other methods are to be condemned by all people. Two of these are birth control and sterilisation. Little will here be said about the first of these methods, since from the Catholic point of view the matter does not admit of argument, and the reasons that have been adduced to attempt its justification have been refuted time after time. One point may, perhaps, be usefully stressed, since its relevance has emerged much more prominently of late. It is this. In the year 1901 the natural increase in the population of England and Wales was 11·6 per 1000.

In 1928, it was 5 per 1000. Birth control, which undoubtedly has been working out its consequences during that period, with progressive acceleration, is producing a stationary population and must soon produce a declining one, when the majority of the people will be old men and women.[1] At a not distant date it is very likely that these old people will die off with rapidly increasing mortality, and the population will suddenly diminish at an alarming rate. But birth control has been accepted without demur by large sections of the people. Catholics will offer permanent and persistent opposition to it. They are not at present listened to. After birth control, admitted as an economic necessity by so many, sterilisation will be favoured as a means of checking the increase of the undesirables. At one end, we have the decrease in the eminently desirable sections of the population, at the other, we may have a decrease in the number of defectives (though the decrease would not be very large unless great numbers of the subnormal group are sterilised). The favourers of both these methods, to be employed concurrently, will then have arrived at their Utopia.

Though nothing further need now be said about the first of these methods, something may, we believe, be usefully said about sterilisation of the defective. Whether it be

[1] By the year 1941, 7.5 per cent of the people will be children and more than 19 per cent over fifty-five.

voluntary or not, it must meet, we confidently hold, with the considered opposition on moral grounds of every rational citizen. It is indeed hoped by some people that sterilisation will not be left to the choice of the individual. It has been openly stated that "public opinion should be educated, so that the sterilisation of the unfit would be, as far as possible, voluntary. But in case of people who are a menace to society, sterilisation should be compulsory."

2. *Sterilisation.*

It is not necessary here to explain how sterilisation is brought about. If produced surgically, the operation is so simple and innocuous to the male individual's health, that its very simplicity is apt to mislead people into thinking that it is no very great matter. That is a consideration which is constantly put forward by the extreme eugenist, as though we should look much more to the actual nature of an operation, and dismiss its grave consequences, than examine the consequences first. Sterilisation, as applied to the defective, has one purpose only, namely, to deprive him of the power of propagating. In other cases, it may be therapeutic or punitive, of which a little will be said later. But regarding sterilisation as a method of mutilating an individual, the following principles may be stated.

An individual has an undoubted right to life and bodily integrity. This right is

natural and fundamental. It is only by means of his own life and by the untrammelled use of his bodily members that a man can achieve his natural perfection. Those things are given to him to subserve the purpose for which he exists. Undoubtedly, he has duties to the State as well as to himself, and if he marries, to his family. But we must be careful not to say that man is first subservient to the needs of the society in which he has chosen to live, for this false principle would lead us to absolute civic slavery. We must also bear in mind that a man's life and bodily integrity are the subjects of rights which pure reason and not only theology establishes.

It must indeed be admitted that the State has power over a man's life and over less than life, namely, man's liberty and his bodily integrity. But the State has merely a qualified power, i.e. it may not use this power as it pleases, as we use a chattel, but its use must be subservient to the prior rights of man, rights which he certainly does not forgo because he has chosen to live with other men in a State, chiefly for his own good, and that he might, under the protection of the State, the more easily achieve that purpose for which he has a body and a life. Nevertheless, man can forfeit his liberty, the integrity of bodily members and his life, not for the sole benefit of others, but in consequence of some serious crime. Unjust rebellion against the State, and murder may

be, though they need not be, accepted by the State as sufficient justification for invoking the power of the sword. Other crimes may be similarly punished, and it is for the wise and prudent legislator to determine which are the crimes that imperil the very existence of the State, and for which the extreme penalty is necessary. But it is only for a grave offence against the State that a grave penalty may justly be exacted. The defective is in no sense an offender against the State or the citizens. He has committed no crime by being defective. It is rather his misfortune that he is what he is, and he may rightly claim the protection of the State.

It is urged that the common good of the State may be secured at the cost of private interests. That is true, but with reservations. The State came into being and exists for the preservation of the natural rights of the individuals who freely form the State. It is an essential aspect of the duty of the State, not indeed viewed as an entity apart from the citizens, but as so many citizens who constitute it, that it should defend and foster the natural rights of unoffending citizens. It would therefore manifestly fail in carrying out an essential duty if it attacked the bodily integrity of an innocent citizen in any way at all, and still more so if it deprived him of the power which he possesses of being able to propagate, since the actual power to propagate is not an

attack on the State, even in the most remote degree. The exercise of his power is quite another thing; that indeed may be curtailed, or entirely precluded for a good reason. This argument is obviously based on the relation of "ends" or "purposes" of existence. There is a manifest subordination of rights in life. The end or purpose of an individual's existence is prior in importance to the end or purpose of the State. The latter has to secure merely the temporal benefit of the citizens. The individual has a right to this, and to a great deal more. There is a certain hierarchy amongst rights. The right of an innocent citizen to his life and bodily integrity as against all other citizens takes the very first place.

To make the matter still clearer it will be helpful to distinguish the different kinds of sterilisation, not that these differ physically, but because they do differ immensely from the moral point of view. They differ morally as much as wilful murder, surgical operations that issue in accidental death, and killing in self-defence in times of war. The three kinds are therapeutic, punitive, and eugenic sterilisation. The first is employed for the sake of the life or health of an individual; the second as a punishment; the third for the benefit of the State, that is, for the sake of other citizens.

Though sterilisation is a serious operation regarded in its consequences to the human race, it may rightly be employed for the

sake of saving the life or the considerable physical well-being of the individual who undergoes it. This is too obvious to need argument. The operation is sometimes practically necessary. If it were thought necessary in cases of otherwise incurable erethism—the excessive sexual urge, considered as a pathological condition—then it is better that a man should be saved from idiocy than that he should retain his sexual potency.

Punitive sterilisation is justified for a sufficient reason. But though the State has the right to punish criminals, it has no right to use those punishments that are not deterrent, nor reformative, nor reparative. Sterilisation with subsequent release cannot be said to be an effectual punishment at all ; whereas, if it is employed without subsequent release, there is no need to mutilate when permanent imprisonment will suffice. We may, therefore, dismiss punitive sterilisation, as it has no bearing on the question of the just treatment of the feeble-minded.

Eugenical sterilisation is purely preventive. It is employed to prevent the transmission of undesirable hereditary qualities to offspring, on the assumption that these are hereditary, a subject on which the present writer pronounces no opinion since his objection to this sort of sterilisation prescinds altogether from theories of heredity.

Even on the assumption that eugenical sterilisation would solve the problem of the

defective, at least partially, Catholic writers generally condemn it. We say generally, for amongst the dozen writers who have dealt with this subject, there are only two, namely, Dr. Mayer and Dr. Bruehl, who think that the right can be conceded to the State under certain circumstances, which, however, do not at present obtain. It would mislead the reader if it was here stated, without qualification, that the unanimous Catholic view is opposed to eugenical sterilisation. One can say that the common view of responsible Catholic writers is emphatically opposed to it, but the two exceptions, one of whom merely voices the opinion of the other, are deserving of careful consideration. We hasten to say that we do not agree with this singular view, and it is to our purpose to show reason for not doing so. Nevertheless, these same writers, who admit that the State could legitimately sterilise defectives, maintain that it would be unwarrantable to assert that society is at present confronted with a real emergency as far as the problem of feeble-mindedness is concerned. We are, they say, in no danger of being overwhelmed by an imminent invasion of degenerates.

However, if the view were true, there would be no need, it seems to us, to await the invasion. One might rightly take steps in advance. But then, again, we might not agree that the invasion is not upon us already. The number of defectives, revealed by recent Reports, make the matter of

dealing with them sufficiently urgent, so that if the opinion of those two writers were correct, the extreme eugenist would rightly invoke the powers of the State to proceed to sterilisation without more ado. Dr. Mayer (all citations are taken from *Birth Control and Eugenics*, by Charles P. Bruehl) admits that legal sterilisation is for the present decidedly premature. Dr. Bruehl thinks that sterilisation represents an emergency measure to which society should have recourse only after other promising policies have been given a fair trial and failed. It is our opinion that the measure would always be premature, and could never be adopted.

The reader will, therefore, hear it stated that some Catholic writers would permit the State to sterilise the unfit as a means of self-defence. When we record their reasons, we shall see how fallacious they are. They defend their opinion on the analogy that the State sends thousands of its best and fittest sons to death in case of war, because the common good in the case of imminent danger prevails over private interests. But then these writers would hold, as we do, that a citizen is bound to defend the State from unjust aggression. All just wars are examples of justifiable self-defence. A soldier is not really sent to death in a case of a just war. All citizens are bound to obey the summons of the State, if it calls upon them, unless a higher law forbids this.

But no defective is antecedently bound to allow himself to be sterilised for the benefit of others. Propagation can be prevented by other ways. A greater invasion of liberty and of bodily integrity is wrong if a lesser will suffice. There is, then, no analogy at all between conscription of soldiers in time of war and sterilisation of blameless defectives.

The second alleged analogy is this: For its protection, the State may make vaccination obligatory and innoculate innocent children with the virus of cowpox, thus exposing them to violent fevers and even to the danger of death.

The second analogy is also a false one, for the innocent children are not innoculated merely for the protection of others, but much more for their own protection, and it must be very obvious that the first and primary effect of vaccination is to safeguard the child, and the second effect is only consequential and accidental. It would certainly be monstrous if children were exposed to death merely for the sake of others; no eugenist, however extreme, would admit such an experiment to be made on his own child.

It is a pity that any writers should have recourse to such false analogies. It is a greater pity that after having employed them, they should then conclude: The State, then, must have the power to deprive mental defectives of the power of generation by a relatively trivial operation. It was

pointed out above that one should judge of the gravity of an operation by its consequences, and not only by the amount of blood lost. It is, moreover, confusing the issue to speak of trivial operations from the point of view of the operator ; one should ask the patient what he thinks about it, and whether he is willing to submit his body to the surgeon's knife that others may benefit by his serious loss. If it be denied that the severance of two small tubes in the body, the *vasa deferentia*—for we are speaking of the male only—is a serious matter, a further consideration will help to the elucidation of our position when we consider, as we ought, the rational nature of man. It is obvious that every action of man as a rational being must be subject to and guided by the moral law, i.e. the law which obliges him to act in accordance with the purpose of all human activity. The purpose of all rational human activity is the attainment of man's end or purpose of existence. Man's purposes of existence are his own natural perfection and the fulfilment of the purposes of his Creator. Man has obligations to himself before he has obligations to the State, both in priority and importance. We must, therefore, admit that the moral law, or the law of man's nature, or the law of right rational conduct, is the supreme law that must rule all man's activities. Therefore we may not improve the condition of man as an animal by offending his moral, i.e. his rational nature,

or in other words, by attacking without justification his natural rights, one of which is the right to his bodily integrity.

It is an assumption of the grossest character to suppose that only the strongest and the fittest have the right to live a human life or to go through it unmaimed. If the defective may rightly be mutilated, he may rightly be killed if his death is a proportionately great advantage to the State. To be logical and reasonable, we must condemn the sterilisation of defectives if we condemn, as we must, the deliberate murder of insane children. The two procedures do not differ in kind, there is only a difference in degree. We need not take any notice, for the moment, of the argument against sterilisation, viz. that to sterilise and to let such persons go free, would lead to promiscuous vice and venereal disease, though this is true. We need not base opposition to sterilisation on its social consequences, though the argument is a perfectly valid one, given the conditions. We may base our opposition to it primarily and essentially on the unjust invasion of the natural right which man has that his bodily organs should not be mutilated to serve the purposes of others, or for their happiness or convenience.

In order to enforce the foregoing arguments against sterilisation of defectives, if enforcement were necessary, it will be well to add the arguments and testimony of a distinguished Medical Officer of Health (Dr.

McSweeny, in the *Catholic Medical Guardian*, July, 1929, pp. 92 *sqq.*), who writes from the practical and the social point of view. He says: "We are assured by medical experts that sterilisation of the female during the child-bearing age upsets the physiological equilibrium of the woman, disturbs the endocrine balance, undermines the nervous system, definitely predisposes towards psychopathic conditions, including insanity."[1]

The feeble-minded girl is extremely liable to succumb to sexual solicitation. She is indifferent to the risks of disease which she is constantly incurring, and when she contracts the disease she is equally regardless of the need for treatment. These girls, if free, are a menace to the public health. Sterilisation is the Magna Charta of the mentally defective prostitute.

"The parents of many defectives are what are called 'carriers' of defectiveness, a state inherited from past generations, it is supposed, without showing itself. The mentally deficient member of a family is the crystallisation in one individual of the accumulated nervous taints from possibly half a dozen ancestral sources. If all the defectives of a generation ago had been

[1] This testimony refers only to women, and the sterilisation of the female is not generally suggested so much as that of the male. It is not the case that any analogous change takes place in the male; in fact, instances are quoted, and not a few, where the male has been positively improved by vasectomy.

sterilised the effect on the number of defectives to-day would have been slight.

"Sterilised defectives are not cured by the operation, nor are they curable at all. Far from becoming fit to live with other citizens, they will remain a burden on everybody; the male defective will become the associate of the criminal, and the female defective will drift on to the streets. Before long, both would be found in the prisons, the Lock Hospital, or the workhouse infirmary. For those reasons it is possible to state that our present method of dealing with mental defectives is more costly to the State than would be the segregation of them in institutions.

"With few exceptions, defectives lead happy lives in institutions. They are with their own kind, they are not maltreated nor ridiculed, and are taught to do some useful work. The few who do fret under restraint are just those who need restraint the most. A Cardiff case is quoted of a defective who escaped from an institution, walked hundreds of miles, and appeared at the office of the Inspector, ragged and half starved, and begged with tears in his eyes to be safely put away again."

This conclusion of the medical witness whom we are quoting is singularly reinforced by the Committee on Mental Deficiency. They report (Pt. III, p. 21) that "the institutions for the defective are happy places for those defectives who are fortunate

enough to get into them. This happiness is certain for those who are admitted while still children. . . . Contentment, happiness, and even obedience do not come so easily to those defectives whom society has failed to rescue until their outlook and nature have been impaired by bad associations, evil doings, and unrestricted licence. . . . In thinking of the defectives in an institution we should clear our minds of a good deal of false sentiment. In the institution they have care, good food, easy occupation without overwork or driving, plenty of recreation, no worry because of real wrong-doing, and above all the feeling of equality. . . . A defective in the outside world is never allowed to believe in himself. Often wrong-doing is the only course that appears to offer any kind of situation he can control, and he takes it for the satisfaction of success."

Lest this evidence might be considered evidence of those interested in keeping defectives in institutions, we find evidence from the side of the defective himself. A most striking proof of the desirability of institutional care on the part of the defective is found in the behaviour of absconders. In the Report (1928) of the Board of Control (p. 74), under the title "Absconders," it is stated : "In an institution where patients are given the greatest amount of liberty consistent with safety, it is expected that some will take an opportunity to abscond. It is so easy for our boys (at the State

Institution of Rampton) to run away, that I am agreeably surprised that a greater number do not seek to do so, especially as a considerable proportion of them have previously left home or institution in any fit of pique or passion that coincided with reasonable opportunity. Nineteen boys and one girl absconded during the year, but excepting one boy they have all returned to the institution. . . . When they know that our main object is training, care and reform, the stimulus to wander in search of an imaginary freedom is not so pressing."

The medical witness previously cited concludes by saying that the fact that defectives, whether sterilised or not, have the same need for institutional treatment, is an answer to the argument that sterilisation will effect huge economies in the administration of Mental Deficiency. When it is stated that the law permitting sterilisation in some of the States of U.S.A. has succeeded in securing the primary object of sterilisation, we have to make the counter-statement that there is no evidence worthy of a moment's consideration. In fact, if sterilisation had been able to secure its greatly vaunted results, it would not have been so readily abandoned in so many of the States that were led to expect the speedy arrival of a new world.

The case against sterilisation has been sufficiently presented to the reader, we hope, to enable him to come to the conclusion that on moral grounds, on social grounds, and on

grounds that regard the defective himself, the plea advanced by the extreme eugenist for the sterilisation of defectives is not only not proven, but is demonstrably fallacious. We shall therefore pass on to the method of segregation, and consider whether or not that procedure is justified on moral grounds, for it is with the moral aspect of these methods that we are chiefly concerned.

3. *Segregation of the defective.*

The segregation that we are considering is the complete separation of defectives from social life with the normal population. The question of their own social life in colonies for the defective, and the question of their intermarriage amongst their own class, are not here discussed. If we object to the sterilisation of defectives on the ground that it is an unjustifiable invasion of the natural rights of man, should we not equally object to the restriction of a man's liberty, which is also a natural right ? The matter requires a clear answer. It is a great pity that some writers misapply the term liberty or freedom, with the result that they can then easily prove any indefensible thesis. Thus, freedom from annoyance is not the same as personal liberty. Yet Major Darwin uses the term in that sense. He says (*What is Eugenics ?* p. 47) : " To have to shut up anyone is, of course, very distasteful to us all, for we all advocate freedom. But can we call the feeble-minded free even when he is at liberty ?

A boy so afflicted may be jeered at in the streets, and when grown up he will not be treated as an equal by his companions. Is this freedom ? " Well, of course it is freedom in the sense of personal liberty to move about from place to place, and to do what one wishes. That is precisely the freedom which is taken away from a defective boy when he is shut up. When we speak of segregation of defectives we mean nothing else than that. We do not hold that when a person is free from annoyance by being incarcerated we are then giving him real liberty.

The segregation of defectives appears to us defensible on moral grounds for the following reasons.

We must admit that the existence of defectives amongst the general body of the population is opposed to the common good of the State for two reasons ; first, they are a danger to themselves because they are irresponsible in varying degrees ; secondly, as a body they are a danger to other citizens.

Therefore, the mentally defective may be segregated in order that they may cease to be a danger to themselves and to others. Once they are segregated, the opportunities of marriage need not be given to them. The natural right to marriage which a man and woman have can only be used when they are in circumstances in which they can either actually exercise that right, or can at least make reasonable and fitting dispositions for

their own lives and that of their offspring relatively to society in general. No defective, speaking generally, and excluding a proportion of the higher grade defectives, can make such provision, and therefore he need not be given by others the opportunities of marriage ; indeed, we may rightly deprive them of the exercise of their right to marry, even though radically they retain the right, for marriage is certainly a social matter, though it is more, and the welfare of others must be considered. A man may not think merely of his own convenience in entering upon marriage, for as a married man he is necessarily related to society, and has no right to cause moral harm to it. A man who cannot fulfil the duties of marriage has no right to marry. The mentally defective cannot fulfil those duties ; a husband is bound to maintain his wife. A defective cannot do so. Nor can a defective have the right to give existence to children whom he cannot support, and who therefore will be a burden on others. Man has not an absolute right to marry, in the same sense as he has a right to life. His right to marry depends on his fitness to fulfil the duties of the married state ; if he cannot fulfil the chief of those duties, he is as little entitled to become a husband and a father as he would be to become a judge without the necessary qualifications.

In this argument, we do not assume that defectives breed defectives. Feeble-minded-

ness may or may not be hereditary. But if a defective couple, unable to carry out their parental duties, had six normal children, they could not educate them as normal children should be educated; they would impose the burden of rearing them on others. That is one of the reasons why defectives may be segregated and not given the opportunity to marry. That reason by itself appears to be valid.

4. *Socialisation.*

The third method for alleviating the burden of the defective suggested by the Committee on Mental Deficiency is socialisation (Pt. III, p. 91). This is a process of assimilating the mentally defective into the social life of the community. If it were possible to apply this method, the defective would be able to lead a happy life, the public would be safeguarded from the consequences that often ensue from the freedom that at present the defective enjoys, and the financial burden on the State would be greatly relieved. There is not sufficient accommodation for the defectives who so urgently need it. They are left in their homes with disastrous results. Adequate accommodation cannot probably be made. Therefore, the problem of socialisation is the problem of giving these defectives sufficient and suitable training in Centres, and adequate supervision during childhood and adolescence. Their return to social life must be very gradual,

the training carried on and the supervision never relaxed. Failure in any part of the process will send the defective back to the home, and the work will have to be begun all over again.

The Catholic views this method, of course, with the greatest sympathy. It is being already employed in some Catholic institutions with, we believe, considerable success. It cannot, however, be employed on any large scale unless the public are prepared to pay the initial cost. One who takes a long view of the matter will readily admit that it is a method that promises to diminish, at least partially, the incidence of defectiveness, to render these people happy, and within a generation or two, will probably give some return for money spent.

CHAPTER VI

THE CHURCH AND EUGENICS

The Catholic Church is in favour of a healthy life, healthy offspring, clean living, temperate habits, continence before marriage, temperance in marital relations, care of the pregnant mother, elimination of venereal diseases and of alcoholism, improvement of the slums, avoidance of over-crowding and of the consequent scandalous herding together in one room of growing children, suitable conditions of labour, appropriate work for women and girls who have to work, and in fact of everything else not contrary to moral principles which an enlightened people through its Government or Municipal Councils aims at securing for the community. All this is eugenical in the best sense and in the highest degree. Many of these measures are adopted by the State; some are left severely alone and not even mentioned, much less urged; such measures, for instance, as imply moral restraint, for the State thinks that the preaching of moral restraint had best be left to religious associations. Yet at the same time, some States allow people to set on foot propaganda of all sorts without

considering whether or not, in the long run, such propaganda tends to the deterioration of the race. There is no doubt that the desires of birth controllers, if realised, to have instruction on birth control legally enforced on unwilling medical attendants in maternity clinics is a step towards the inevitable result of not merely a stationary but of a diminishing population. Whilst the Church urges all the faithful, the married included, to exercise necessary restraint by the use of their rational will, birth controllers are devising means whereby people may avoid all restraint, and on the other hand, would-be sterilisers, despairing of any restraint among the dwellers of the slums, are proposing to apply, indeed to enforce, short sharp methods of preventing the multiplication of what they are pleased to call the unfit, namely, the very poor, the feckless, the weedy, the unemployable, the consumptive, and if they had their way all the higher grade defectives, and the 10 per cent of the population who in their definition are styled the lower stratum. Two considerations may here be at once suggested, namely, they are not going to induce the better stock to have more children because the unfit are sterilised. Secondly, some higher grade defectives can very well be trained to look after their children, but the sterilisers are certainly not going to ask these people whether or not they are willing to sacrifice their rights for the benefit of the well-to-do,

who will cozen and pamper the one child in depleted nurseries, and so eventually do vastly more harm to the coming generations than if the unfit were still with us. The Church sets her face against all such selfish theories. She protects the poor and the unfit, as well as the fit. If then we ask what precisely the Church does for eugenics, we may consider the following facts :

1. The virtue of temperance in all things, which the Church inculcates, especially in eating, drinking and sexual relations between the married, is a factor of the first importance in health, as all medical opinion testifies. Temperance is not practised by indulging in a little sinning ; even one act against the virtue is sinful. It is impossible for married people to say with any honesty that they may practise a little birth control, but that they will not practise much ; that they will not indulge in it when they want a child, but will use it when children would be a burden. That is not temperance or restraint ; rather, it is giving free rein to desire, when it pleases them to do so, to the actual and positive exclusion of the very purpose for which they have their sexual powers.

2. It is well known that absolute sexual continence before marriage gives strength to the body and activity to the mind. The Church urges the grave obligation of continency on all the unmarried. More than that ; every thought and desire that might lead to sexual incontinence is to be checked,

and this asceticism is known to be healthful and the lack of it is known to impair mental and bodily powers, especially in the young.

3. The Church more than favours the rational selection of a partner for marriage. The youth or maid who is hurried into marriage by uncontrolled passion is unlikely to make a good choice. A rational choice regards not bodily fitness only, but the existence of the Christian virtues in a future partner, for the growth of Christian virtues in the character of the child brought up by good Christian parents is more eugenic than the development of a muscular body and an active brain without those virtues. If the Christian virtues are lacking in a prospective partner, the Church discourages the choice of such a one.

4. The Church insists on the cultivation of the will in doing good and resisting temptations to evil. From infancy, the child is taught by her to place the spirit, that is the soul, above the body and its appetites. The religion that urges the very highest ideals need not fear that it will condone the attitude of those worldly people who face both ways. Some of the eugenics taught outside the Catholic Church by those who are extreme in their views and want a short cut to the eugenical Utopia is both sanctimonious and cruel. It actually applauds what it calls the self-restraint of those who use methods of birth control when a child cannot be supported, a self-restraint that

surely exists also in the unmarried who indulge in irregular relations—it bids the young married couple to pervert their natural functions, it panders to sexual intemperance, it is very tender to human passions, yet it proceeds to urge the mutilation of the defective for the benefit of others. We say designedly, for the benefit of others, though the eugenist confuses the issue by weeping over the dreadful lot of the poor defective who is burdened—so they represent the case—with a houseful of defective children.

5. Good eugenists admit not only the power of religion but maintain its necessity. Thus, Professor Whetham: "Without religion and without morals, there is apparently no possibility of existence for the human race. . . . Thus it becomes certain not only that religion is a definite biological factor in the social economy, but that its value is probably supreme, and that some form of religious development is an absolute necessity for the successful evolution of human society." Again, Major Leonard Darwin concludes his work on Eugenics by saying that "it is on religion that eugenics must rely for the motive force in the long struggle for human progress that lies before us." The Catholic Church certainly contributes the elements of religion and good moral teaching to the eugenical progress of the race.

6. The two racial poisons that are responsible for a vast amount of degeneracy are alcoholism and venereal infection. Without

assuming that the poison of alcoholism is passed on to offspring, there is not the smallest doubt that the offspring of habitual drunkards are neglected and abused and more readily contract vicious ways than do others. The other poison and scourge of the race, syphilis, is more dysgenic still. It affects all the organs of the body, the brain and the nerves, and issues in general paralysis. To counter these scourges, the Church impresses on all her members the importance of the virtues of temperance and chastity. She would deter a girl from marrying a drunkard, however wealthy and well-born he may happen to be. An habitual drunkard who foresees that he will not be able to live a decent life with his wife and children, has no right to marry. A syphilitic has as little right to marry, unless his intended wife fully knows of his condition and is willing to marry him. But if they do marry, they are bound to safeguard their offspring from infection, or if the offspring is infected, to take timely measures to have it cured by competent medical help. It is certain that a child of a syphilitic father and a healthy mother may be born healthy but will develop signs of the disease in a few weeks or months. The stigmata of the disease can be transmitted to offspring in the second, the third, and probably the fourth generation. The wife is so liable to be infected, and the consequences are so dreadful, that no girl should marry without

very good evidence of the health of her partner. Contraception, it is stated on good authority (Dr. L. F. Flick, M.D., in *The Ecclesiastical Review*, October, 1929), has become the strongest ally of venereal diseases, chancroid, gonorrhea, and syphilis, and more than anything else has carried these diseases into the sacred precincts of wedded life and home. Nearly 30 per cent of all venereal diseases in women which come to the attention of physicians in private practice in New York City are contracted from their husbands. Morrow writes that in his service in the New York Hospital he found that 70 per cent of the women with syphilis were infected by their husbands. Charles Gibbs, Surgeon of the Lock Hospitals in London, stated that at those hospitals more than half the women who came for treatment had been implanted by their husbands. These facts will not be surprising when we are assured by the same authority that it has been estimated that 70 per cent of the adult male population of New York has or has had gonorrhea. Noeggerath stated that of every thousand married men in the City of New York eight hundred have or have had gonorrhea. It is probable that the disease is equally prevalent in all large cities.

In order to prevent the miseries that ensue from these diseases, it has been thought by some well-intentioned social workers that the public should have easy access to health stations, or clinics, where

people may be taught how to be disinfected, and indeed to disinfect themselves, should they contract the disease; and more than this, namely, that they should, if they wish, carry about with them the necessary disinfectants. The advocates of these methods of prevention of the spread of venereal diseases would have boys and girls, on reaching the age of puberty, taught the methods. All such propaganda banishes the sense of decency, and, we cannot doubt it, fills the minds of the habitués of these clinics with too frequent and too facile a preoccupation with sexual matters, so that the proposed remedies are calculated to do an immense amount of moral harm. In some countries health certificates before marriage are required of the man. We believe that the Church would not object to health certificates in principle.

7. The Church will not tolerate divorce at will or by collusion nor for any reason. A declaration of nullity is not divorce. She alone has the right to deal with the marriages of the baptised apart from the civil effects. Where divorce is legalised, either there are no children, or the children are neglected or are indoctrinated with the pagan principles of their parents. Every good eugenist should applaud the opposition of the Church to divorce, since divorce among the fit and healthy causes that decrease in a fit population which it is the endeavour of the eugenist to check.

8. The Church allows a woman to separate from her adulterous or criminal husband, and will not ask her ever to return to him. Her body at all events is kept clean and the chances of deterioration, physical and mental, are removed.

9. Christian marriage is a good eugenical measure for future generations, for the Christian's temperance in all things, not least in marital relations, fosters bodily health and mental vigour. Besides the social obligation arising out of marriage, there arises also the moral obligation, continually enforced by the Church in her teaching, an obligation that has, for the good Catholic, the strongest sanctions. The obligation extends to the care of offspring, warding off infection, providing a good and healthy home, educating children in virtue, teaching the young to lead clean lives, not from fear but from the love of virtue. Where these measures are loyally observed, and every Catholic is conscious that this is a matter of conscience and of sin, there will be no need to fear the ravages of disease, beyond that amount of it which is inevitable, nor will the unfit be so multiplied as to be a menace to the State.

10. The right of parents to oppose the unsuitable marriage of their unemancipated and minor children for good reasons was exercised in this country before the late war to a greater extent, we believe, than it now is, and it is still largely exercised in

Catholic countries. Children who have not reached the age of twenty-one are urged by the Church not to marry without the knowledge or against the reasonable wishes of their parents. There can be no doubt, for observation proves the fact, that if children took the advice of wise parents before marrying, there would be less feeble-mindedness, less insanity, and much less misery and poverty, factors that so easily lead to degeneracy.

11. The Church urges married persons to exercise self-restraint where the family is growing beyond its economic means. That restraint, it must be admitted, is not easily exercised, but like self-restraint in other circumstances, it is a matter of growth and development, and should be attempted from the beginning of married life. It cannot be doubted that it would prove to be less arduous if married persons took advantage of the helps which the Catholic religion offers them. But in extreme cases, where they find it impossible not to add to their family, they are taught to trust that God will help them to find a way out of their future difficulties. To resort to sin in order to make provision for the future, is to abandon all trust in Divine Providence. We do not minimise the difficulties of marital restraint, and if large families are the result of living up to the teaching of the Church, a Catholic must say that, though in many cases a large family cannot be

approved of on merely physical eugenical grounds, the large family may not be prevented by recourse to sin, for physical well-being may never be secured by the sacrifice of man's moral nature. No extreme eugenist will approve of this attitude, but it must be the attitude of everyone who exalts the spirit above the flesh, for the body is, as it were, the garment and integument of the immortal spirit, with its own subjection to the laws of its nature, which are inviolable.

12. The publicity given to eugenics in its more morbid aspects, and all the talk about eugenical methods, are disapproved of by all Catholic writers. The propaganda immerses the youth and the unmarried girl in an atmosphere of prurient thought and preoccupation about sex, which is harmful. The result of the objectionable propaganda in favour of restricting the birth-rate is that multitudes of the young discuss and discover the ways and means of enjoying the physical pleasures of marriage without the responsibilities, and the pleasures of pre-nuptial unchastity. The Church urges the eugenic necessity of putting away thoughts of sex, until it is right and proper to entertain them in the married state, and even then without too much preoccupation.

13. Though the following appears the strangest of all pleas to the Protestant mind, the Church's law of celibacy for priests and religious is an immense help to the healthy offspring of the population, for the possibility

of continency is manifested in the lives of these classes, and the young man, whose passions are entangling him in the meshes of illicit, perhaps infectious sexual relations, will be helped by the conviction that he can do what others have done in respect of avoiding occasions of sin and gaining the victory over his passions. If he is a Catholic he will take the obvious means, namely, devout and frequent reception of the Sacraments.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY

1. The science of eugenics is welcomed by all Catholics. Some of the methods suggested for the improvement of the race are condemned by all Catholics. We should not, however, confuse the science with the methods.

2. Birth control, as the term is generally understood, is immoral, and is condemned by all Catholics on grounds and for reasons which have been pointed out so frequently that it would be superfluous to repeat them here. The reasons are ethical and not based merely on authority.

3. The moral aspect of sterilisation is this : Eugenical sterilisation, i.e. sterilisation of the unfit with the view of preventing them propagating their kind is an unjust attack on bodily integrity for the benefit of others. As defectives are not criminals, this procedure is immoral. The State has no right to sterilise the defective.

4. The moral aspect of segregation is this : The feeble-minded, being a menace to themselves and to others, if they are left at large, may be segregated. This conclusion takes

no account of their propagating defective offspring. The principle of heredity is not invoked. Defectives could not maintain even healthy offspring if they had them.

5. The Church is in favour of eugenics in principle, and has done and can do immense good to the race. But her methods demand a measure of self-restraint. At that point, she parts company with the extreme eugenist.

APPENDIX

SOME CONCLUSIONS OF THE BOARD OF CONTROL AND OF THE MENTAL DEFICIENCY COMMITTEE

I. The Board of Control

1. There appears no ground whatever for the suggestion, not infrequently made, that the stress of modern life has resulted in an abnormal increase in insanity. It is to be regretted that the recovery rate (in mental disorders) over a long period of years has remained practically constant.

2. Success has attended the treatment of general paralysis by induced malaria.

3. Too often patients who have been discharged from mental hospitals break down because the transition is too sudden and too severe. The difficulty is aggravated by the tendency to regard the discharged patient with a certain suspicion. Nothing could be worse for a sensitive patient than to feel that he is regarded by his fellows with curiosity or distrust.

4. There are numerous cases now sent to mental hospitals which, for their own sake and for that of others, could be better dealt with in institutions for mental defectives. Very little progress has been made during the year (1928) to meet the shortage of accommodation for mental defectives.

5. There is no reason to doubt that the incidence of mental defect is very much greater than has

hitherto been supposed. It is not improbable that the number of mental defectives has increased during the last twenty years.

6. The total number of mental defectives in England and Wales is approximately 314,000 (on the basis of Dr. E. O. Lewis's ascertainment). Mental deficiency is a bigger problem than has been hitherto recognized. The nation is not giving the problem the attention it demands.

7. The incidence of mental defectiveness is greater in agricultural than industrial areas. This is probably due to selective hereditary factors resulting from the migration of better stock to urban areas, and the consequent concentration of the poorer stocks in rural areas.

8. The relative numbers of the three grades of defect—feeble-mindedness, imbecility, and idiocy —are 5 idiots, 20 imbeciles, 75 feeble-minded per cent. The incidence of certain grades of deficiency seems to be much higher among males than among females; 30 per cent more boys than girls among the lower grade defectives, i.e. imbeciles and idiots, ascertained, and 33 per cent more men than women. In the group of the feeble-minded the figures were 17 per cent more boys than girls, and 8 per cent more men than women (Report, B. of C., p. 51).

9. Of the lower grade children (imbeciles and idiots) under 16, 73 per cent were left in the general community, and of these 24 per cent attended the public elementary schools. No less than 41 per cent of the whole group of lower grade children remained at home; with a few exceptions, the whole of this group could be said to receive no systematic training whatsoever.

10. Cases that most urgently need care are left in Prisons, Poor Law Institutions, or under

conditions outside where they cannot adequately be cared for and controlled.

11. Most Local Authorities have not as yet completed their ascertainment, while some have hardly begun this part of their duties.

12. Sterilisation is relatively unimportant in relation to those defectives who are receiving institutional treatment.

13. It does not seem to follow that the probability of parenthood, so obviously undesirable in cases where defectives (about 200,000) must remain in the community, can only be obviated by sterilisation.

14. With a more enlightened and educated public opinion, the rational use of the two safeguards (supervision and guardianship) would go a long way to eliminate, or at any rate to reduce to a negligible minimum, the risk of procreation.

15. It would be a valuable safeguard if the marriage of defectives could be prohibited by law.

16. In the Report of Dr. Rees Thomas on the State Institution of Rampton a particularly interesting remark was made about accommodation for defective children: "A house is always more homely and comfortable than the usual type of ward. . . . The girl whose only seat is a bench against a wall cannot possibly be so contented as the girl who can claim a chair of her own. A bench may accommodate large numbers in a small space, but the advantages are entirely lost in the irritation of the close proximity of other elbows, and taking the results as a whole, meagre furnishing and grey walls are less economical. It is not suggested that palatial surroundings are required and that, if provided, they will produce perfect behaviour; but, nevertheless, chairs in which tired limbs and bodies can find some ease are

necessary to peace and contentment of mind. The child whose early life has been spent on soap boxes must appreciate the comforts of even the cheapest windsor chair."

II. The Mental Deficiency Committee

1. There are too many areas where supervision is carried out in the most perfunctory manner, where visits are too few and too hurried to be of any value, and where the knowledge of the case is quite incomplete. There are still large areas with populations of 300,000 and upwards, where there is only one paid qualified visitor. In many instances six months or a year will elapse between the visits, and no machinery exists for enabling the Local Authority to learn how the defective is faring in the interval.

2. The fact that there are only 1452 defectives of all ages on the registers of the occupation and industrial centres in the whole country, that is, only 8 per cent of the 18,000 defectives under supervision, shows that the fringe of this problem has hardly been touched. It is only fair to say, however, that the duty of providing for the training of these defectives was first laid on Local Authorities in the Act of 1927.

3. A considerable number of defectives are placed under supervision who should be in institutions and cannot be safeguarded in the community.

4. The difficulty of finding satisfactory and suitable guardians, combined with the lack of institutional accommodation, has frequently led to the practice of appointing the defective's own parent as his guardian.

5. Perhaps the first lesson to be learnt from up-to-date institutions, and one which it is

important that the public should know and appreciate, is that, contrary to what is frequently supposed by those who have no knowledge of them, they are happy places for those defectives who are fortunate enough to get into them. The Report goes on to describe at length the Trade-Training, the Form of work by defectives, the Diet, the Recreation and the Discipline in Institutions, all of which reflect the greatest credit on those who organise these things.

6. The Committee find it hard to believe that there has not been some increase in the incidence of mental deficiency, even after all allowance has been made for the better methods of ascertainment, the lowering of infant mortality, the greater longevity of defectives, and the somewhat different interpretation of standards.

7. It was observed in one of the investigated slum areas that after a slum area had been cleared and the population moved to well-designed houses and to generally hygienic surroundings, the very conditions which it was hoped to remedy soon recur, and oblige the Local Authority to intervene to prevent the emergence of a new slum area. It was in such a district as this that the Investigator found one of the highest incidences of mental defect found in any area of comparable size.

8. It was estimated that in England and Wales as a whole there are some 17,000 lower grade children and some 84,000 adult defectives, 101,000 defectives in all, who require some form of institutional treatment.

9. Defectives in Poor Law Institutions are dealt with as paupers, and not as persons requiring care on account of their mental condition. The detention of mentally defective persons in Mental Hospitals has greatly increased the difficulties of

the Lunacy Authorities in providing adequate accommodation for cases of mental disease and disorder, for whom these institutions are primarily intended.

10. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that the condition of mental deficiency is an incurable one. It is essential, therefore, that the young mental defective should be suitably and carefully trained. It is the untrained and undisciplined defective, particularly among the higher grades, who is a menace to society. The untrained defective may subsist for a few years on his parents, or may partially maintain himself by doing jobs, but he will in many cases drift into the Poor Law Institution, where he will remain, or become an "in and out," and will continue to be a burden to the community or his friends for the rest of his life.

11. No scheme for the care of defectives can be really effective unless and until legal provision is made with regard to the prevention of the marriage of such defectives.

12. It must be admitted that our present attitude towards the mental defective is altogether too passive or merely repressive. . . . If we were to place greater emphasis upon the activities of the mental defective that can be directed into useful channels, we should need to concern ourselves less about their care, supervision, and control. Suitable and congenial employment is essential to human happiness; whether the individual be normal or mentally defective, nothing socialises so effectively as work.

Conclusion.

The reader will have seen from the extracts given above—if he read the Reports he would see

with poignant clearness—that our present methods of dealing with defectives leave very much to be desired. The problem of the defective requires drastic handling. Legislation is needed, and Local Authorities should realise the urgency of fulfilling their civic tasks. Present legislation seems to be involved in a mass of intricacies that want unravelling, and local provision is singularly inadequate. Every citizen will surely consider it part of his civic duty to help to form a sound public opinion in the matter along the lines of the Reports referred to, for we can get nothing better to go on. Perhaps the reader will, with the present writer, reject the badly-conceived and unfounded nostrums of those people who, if listened to, would, we believe, produce in two or three generations an immense problem for posterity, whose solution then would cost millions where now some thousands would suffice. Sterilisation on the grand scale would doubtless extinguish some of the defectiveness for a generation, but at what a cost to the liberties of the defective, and at what a cost to the moral rectitude of the rest! Thereafter, defectiveness would raise its head again, for it is endemic in the race. The methods of birth control would certainly have produced a population mostly of aged people. The work, in order to defray all expenses for the needs and luxuries—if any of the latter remained—of the people, would have to be done by the young. But having been taught by their fathers to be selfish, being the children of birth controllers and sterilisers, there is little hope that they would retain a vestige of the moral sense; they would have become self-indulgent and cruel.

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